DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Building strong, healthy communities together

STATEMENT OF MANDATE

2010 - 2011

NOVA SCOTIA

Community Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister 3

1.0 Department Mandate 4

2.0 Performance Measures by Outcome 6
- 2.1 Nova Scotians are able to support themselves and their families . 7
- 2.2 Adequate and affordable housing 8
- 2.3 Children, youth and families have a safe, secure and stable environment in which to grow and prosper 9
- 2.4 Persons with disabilities have access to the most appropriate supports to enhance their quality of life 11

3.0 Budget Context 12

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER

On behalf of the Department of Community Services, we are pleased to present the Department of Community Services' 2010-2011 Statement of Mandate.

Our plans for the year will build on our vision of economic and social well-being for Nova Scotians. Helping people in need is what we do each and every day.

We are transforming the Employment Support and Income Assistance Program to increase economic independence and enhance social inclusion. The program will be client-focused, and will give lasting support instead of being a last resort, turning Employment Support and Income Assistance into a program that achieves positive outcomes for clients and their families.

In 2010 -2011, we will continue to work with our federal, municipal and community partners to meet the housing needs of low-income Nova Scotians. Programs such as the Affordable Housing Initiative and the Economic Action Plan will continue to add additional affordable rental units across the province.

Government is committed to improving life for Nova Scotian families and securing the future for our children. Our focus in the coming year will be on creating more child care spaces and subsidies for parents. We will continue to deliver funding in a meaningful way that benefits Nova Scotia's children, families and child care professionals.

Under the Services for Persons with Disabilities program, the department will review current policies and programs to ensure services are working on behalf of those who need our help.

Our priorities for the new fiscal year will allow Government to build better futures for individuals, families and communities. We look forward to continuing our work with the many stakeholders, partners and organizations who help support Nova Scotians in need.

Regards,

Denise Peterson-Rafuse
Minister, Department of Community Services

Judith F. Ferguson
Deputy Minister, Department of Community Services

1.0 DEPARTMENT MANDATE

The primary responsibility of the Department of Community Services is to ensure the basic needs of individuals and families are met by providing financial support to persons in need and by protecting children and adults at risk. Most of the department's expenditures are in the form of direct payments to clients in need of financial assistance or to service providers who provide residential, vocational, child care, housing, protection and other social services on behalf of the department. These services form a secure and predictable social safety net for Nova Scotians and help contribute to better futures for children and families, persons with disabilities, seniors, and communities.

Mission

The Department of Community Services is committed to a sustainable social support system that promotes the independence, self-reliance, and security of the people we serve...achieved through excellence in service delivery, leadership, and collaboration with our partners.

Services are delivered under the authority and direction of the following legislation:

- Adoption Information Act
- Children and Family Services Act
- Day Care Act
- Disabled Persons Commission Act
- Employment Support and Income Assistance Act
- Homes for Special Care Act
- Housing Act
- Housing Development Corporation Act
- Senior Citizen's Financial Aid Act
- Social Assistance Act
- Social Workers Act

Core business areas are collections of individual programs whose results and outcomes are fundamental to the department in carrying out its mandate. The department has four core business areas:

Employment Support and Income Assistance

The focus of the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) core business area is to provide financial assistance for persons in need and to facilitate their movement towards employment, independence and self-sufficiency. Supports include:

- financial assistance for basic needs and special needs
- training and employability supports
- prescription drug coverage for income assistance recipients and children of low income families
- children's benefits for low income families.

Housing

A range of housing programs are available to ensure that more households in Nova Scotia have access to safe, appropriate, affordable and sustainable housing. The range of housing programs and services includes:

- provincial loan and mortgage programs
- grants for home repairs
- help for major repairs and adaptations
- new home construction
- co-operative housing program

Housing Authorities and Property Operations

This core business area provides direction and support to the department and the Nova Scotia Housing Development Corporation in the planning and management of their properties (approximately 11,300 public housing units) and other residential facilities owned by the department. Core support functions include:

- asset management including property management support, real property, lease management and risk coordination

- technical services including design, specification and standards, and building project services

- project management for large scale construction projects.

In addition, the division provides operational and policy direction to seven Regional Housing Authorities. The Housing Authorities manage the delivery of public housing.

Family and Community Supports

This core business area focuses on the provision of safe and nurturing environments for children, youth and families to enable them to develop to their full potential. The presence of, and opportunity for, positive, supportive experiences in the early years in the home, the care environment, and the neighbourhood can promote optimal outcomes in a child's development including educational, linguistic, social, emotional, behavioural, and physical domains. Collaborative practices that enhance service delivery to children, youth and families is reinforced through the Child and Youth Strategy.

In addition, to support people at various stages of their development and independence a range of services for children and adults with an intellectual disability, a long-term mental illness, a physical disability, or some combination of the three disabilities are also available. Services are purchased on behalf of eligible clients from a network of organizations across the province.

The range of programs and services delivered by the core business area includes:

- adoption and foster care programs
- child protection services

- support for children in care
- secure treatment
- early childhood development programs
- prevention services
- youth services and supports
- Child and Youth Strategy - *Our Kids Are Worth It*
- services for persons with disabilities

More information on the department's programs and services can be found on the department's website, http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/.

2.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Each year, the department provides a wide range of social services to 100,000 Nova Scotians, or over 15% of provincial population. Collectively these programs and services contribute to the achievement of the following outcomes:

- Nova Scotians are able to support themselves and their families
- adequate and affordable housing
- children, youth and families have a safe, secure and stable environment in which to grow and prosper
- persons with disabilities have access to the most appropriate supports to enhance their quality of life

As indicated in the following tables, several interrelated performance measures are used to help track progress towards achieving these results.

Outcome: Nova Scotians are able to support themselves and their families

Measure / Rationale	Base Year Data	Targets	Trends	Strategic Priorities and Actions
Number and % of NS living in poverty (LICO) - identifies Nova Scotians who are at or below the low income cutoff	2006: 76,000; 8.4% of the NS population	reduce the number and % of NS living in poverty	2007: 74,000; 8.2%	Continue implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy with specific emphasis on the redesign of ESIA.
Number and % of children living in poverty (LICO) - identifies children who are at or below the low income cutoff	2006: 16,000; 8.7% of the NS children	reduce the number and % of children living in poverty	2007: 15,000; 8.4%	Continue implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
Average monthly beneficiaries as a % of the NS population - represents the % of low income households dependent, in whole or in part, on income assistance to meet their basic needs in the context of the NS population	2005-06: 5.5% of the NS population	2010-11: 4.6% 2013-14: 4.5%	2008-09: 4.6% 2007-08: 4.8% 2006-07: 5.1%	Redesign of the ESIA program with a focus on the development of coordinated supports that are responsive to clients' needs, including the provision of supports for clients in transition or requiring only temporary supports.
% of income assistance recipients with wage income - is an indication of recipients with labour market attachment and their ability to achieve a greater degree of self-reliance and independence	2005-06: 10.9%	2010-11: 9.2% 2013-14: 10%	2008-09: 8.9% 2007-08: 9.9% 2006-07: 10.7%	A goal of the redesign of the ESIA program is to remove disincentives to employment and assist recipients to attach and remain engaged with the labour market. The exploration of pre-employment programming and revised wage incentives and asset levels are key priorities.
% of youth (16 - 24) receiving income assistance assisted to enhance their employability - youth in financial need have opportunities to transition to employment and self-reliance	2005-06: 30.7% of youth assisted	2010-11: 42% 2013-14: 42%	2008-09: 37% 2007-08: 37.5% 2006-07: 34.4%	Collaboration and work is ongoing with other labour market related federal and provincial departments on improving access to skill development and employment opportunities for youth. Work continues with other program divisions in Community Services to develop an integrated continuum of career development supports to assist youth.

Outcome: Adequate and affordable housing

Measure/ Rationale	Base Year Data	Targets	Trends	Strategic Priorities and Actions
Number and % of households unable to access acceptable housing (core housing need) - represents households that fall below adequacy, suitability or affordability standards	2006: 43,800 households; representing 12.1% of all NS households	decrease the number and % of households unable to access acceptable housing	2006: NB - 10.3% PE - 12.6% NL - 14.2%	Where approximately 2 out of 3 households in core housing need are renters, programs such as the Affordable Housing Initiative and the Economic Actions plan will continue to add additional affordable rental units throughout the province.
% of co-operative housing organizations who achieve a ranking of Level I or a High Level II - indicates the health of cooperative housing based on an assessment of their financial, democratic and physical condition	2005-06: 63% of co-operative housing organizations	2010-11: 75% 2013-14: 80%	2008-09: 70% 2007-08: 68% 2006-07: 61%	Through the Economic Action Plan coops and not for profit organizations will see over $20 million invested through the Social Housing Assistance and Repair Program.
Number of households assisted with health and safety related home repairs - measure of the department's efforts to preserve, in good condition, and adapt existing housing occupied by low income households	2005-06: 2,429 households	2010-11: 2,300[1] 2013-14: 2,500	2008-09: 2,355 2007-08:2,400 2006-07: 2,540	2009-10 saw the renewal of programs such as RRAP and Affordable Housing which assist homeowners and renters with health and safety repairs and adaptations. The Province will continue to offer a suite of home repair programs ranging from grants to forgivable loans for low income Nova Scotians.

[1]This target reflects an increase in the size of the grants allowing for deeper coverage but fewer grants.

Outcome: Children, youth and families have a safe, secure and stable environment in which to grow and prosper

Measure/ Rationale	Base Year Data	Targets	Trends	Strategic Priorities and Actions
Number of children in care placed for adoption - it is in a child's best interest to be placed for adoption as quickly as possible as secure stable family environment is an important factor in healthy child development	2005-06: 116 children	2010-11: 100 or more children 2013-14: 100 or more children	2008-09: 121 2007-08: 105 2006-07: 87	The focus of recruitment will be for adoptive families for sibling groups and children 8 years of age and older.
Number of spaces[2] in regulated child care settings - is a measure of the department's commitment to provide safe child care	2006-07: 13,249 spaces	2010-11:14,785 2013-14: 15,000	2009-10: 14,485 2008-09: 14,135 2007-08: 13,455	The child care expansion loan program will provide approximately 300 new spaces for families. Operating grants will be enhanced to provide more support for salaries and wages and other operational costs for licensed child care centres.
% of child care spaces subsidized - an indicator of the availability of child care for low income families	2006-07: 23% (3,045 subsidies) of licensed child care spaces were subsidized	2010-11: 33% 2013-14: 33%	2009-10: 27% (3,925) 2008-09: 24% (3,425) 2007-08: 23% (3,154)	Create an additional 250 subsidies in 2011-12.

[2]To better measure the capacity of the child care system, this measure was changed to include both full and part time spaces.

Measure/ Rationale	Base Year Data	Targets	Trends	Strategic Priorities and Actions
Number of families with children with a disability participating in the Direct Family Support program - enables a family to care for a disabled child at home benefitting from all aspects of family and community living	2005-06: 1,104	2010-11: maintain the current level of service 2013-14: increase in the number of families accessing the program	2008-09: 1,044[3] 2007-08: 1,082 2006-07: 1,133	The focus this year is to review current policies, processes and procedures to ensure the program is making the best use of current resources. - Look for opportunities to align/harmonize policies with other policies of the department. - Implement a provincial wait list policy.

[3]This decreasing trend reflects the aging of children out of the Direct Family Support program for children to the adult program.

Outcome: Persons with disabilities have access to the most appropriate supports to enhance their quality of life

Measure	Base Year Data	Target	Trends	Strategic Priorities and Actions
Number of adult clients with disabilities receiving support services who remain at home with their families - demonstrates progress towards improving the continuum of residential support options	2005-06: 453 clients	2010-11: maintain the current level of service 2013-14: 1,200	2008-09: 835 2007-08: 727 2006-07: 550	The focus this year is to review current policies, processes and procedures to ensure the program is making the best use of current resources. - Look for opportunities to align/harmonize policies with other policies of the department. - Implement a provincial wait list policy.
Number of clients placed in alternative family support homes - demonstrates progress towards improving the continuum of residential support options	2006-07: 23 clients	2010-11: maintain the current level of service 2013-14: 80	2008-09: 48 2007-08: 38	
Number of independent living support clients - demonstrates progress towards improving the continuum of residential support options	2006-07: 25 clients	2010-11: maintain the current level of service 2013-14: 115	2008-09:105 2007-08: 40	
Number of clients served by adult service centres - measures the department's ability to provide access to programs that will enhance the quality of life of persons with disabilities	2006-07: 1,770 clients	2010-11: maintain the current level of service 2013-14: 2,000	2008-09: 1,870 2007-08: 1,770	

6.0 BUDGET CONTEXT

Community Services			
	2009-2010 Estimate	**2009-2010 Forecast**	**2010-2011 Estimate**
Program & Service Area	($thousands)	($thousands)	($thousands)
Gross Departmental Expenses:			
Senior Management	1,511	1,316	2,007
Corporate Services Unit	13,865	12,418	11,322
Policy and Information Management	4,692	4,982	6,282
Field Offices	12,716	11,894	12,634
Services For Persons with Disabilities	235,673	237,311	243,851
Family and Children's Services	190,840	181,866	199,767
Housing Services	136,399	132,688	129,915
Employment Support and Income Assistance	342,433	349,034	357,857
Housing Authority and Property Operations	7,684	7,778	7,927
Total Departmental Expenses	945,813	939,287	971,562
TCA Purchase Requirements	750	0	1,450
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	1,495	1,392	1,606